



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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OUTLAWS MOTORCYCLE CLUB LEADER SENTENCED

Tampa, FL - Today U.S. District Judge James D. Whittemore sentenced James Lee Wheeler, a/k/a Frank Wheeler, the national and international president of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club, to 16 years, seven months' imprisonment. On September 30, 2003, Wheeler was found guilty of conspiracy to commit racketeering, racketeering, and obstruction of justice arising out of his involvement in the Outlaws Motorcycle Club.

The Wheeler case is the fourth significant Outlaws racketeering prosecution in the Middle District of Florida in recent years. In 1995, 14 members of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club were convicted of various racketeering and drug offenses after a four-month trial. In 1997, four Outlaws members were convicted of racketeering and drug charges following a two-month trial. In 2001, Harry "Taco" Bowman, the former national and international president of the Outlaws, was convicted of racketeering and related charges. Since 1995, a number of other Outlaws members pled guilty to various criminal offenses. Wheeler's conviction brings to 31, the number of Outlaws who have been convicted. Those convicted

include the presidents of chapters located in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Orlando, Daytona Beach, and Fort Lauderdale, three regional presidents, and the last two national and international presidents of the Outlaws.

At the conclusion of the trial, the jury found Wheeler guilty of conspiring with other individuals to violate the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) and using the Outlaws Motorcycle Club and its local chapters throughout the United States as a criminal enterprise to participate in a pattern of racketeering activity.

The successful prosecution of Wheeler was the result of an extensive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Daytona Beach Police Department. Assistant United States Attorneys James A. Muench and Katherine M. Ho handled the Wheeler prosecution.

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